(b) the estimates of profits of Shipping Corporation of India in this year;

(c) whether it will perform better this year or its profits are likely to fall; and

(d) the steps being taken to advise the SCI to maintain its profit level ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) Yes, Sir. There could be a drop in the profitability of Shipping Companies this year, due to the downward trend in freight rates and hike in insurance premium of ships in the wake of terrorist attacks in September in US.

(b) The budgeted profit (after tax) of Shipping Corporation of India for the year 2001-02 is Rs. 236.47 crores as compared to the actual net profit of Rs. 382.60 crores during 2000-01.

(c) It is anticipated that there would be a drop in the profitability of the company this year, as compared to the previous year (2000-01).

(d) SCI is a commercial organisation where the profitability is governed by the market forces. Hence, no specific direction is warranted in this regard.

Plan to increase the navigable depth in Kolkata and Haldia Ports

2231. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) the present navigable depth in approach channels to Kolkata and Haldia Ports;

(b) whether any planning is being made to increase the navigable depth in Kolkata and Haldia Ports; and

(c) if so, the details of the project alongwith estimated cost, targeted date of completion and targeted navigable depth ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK) : (a) Navigable depth in the long approach channels to Kolkata Dock System (KDS) and Haldia Dock Complex (HDC) depends on minimum depths on several shallow bars that have to be negotiated by the ships. These depths vary widely and seasonally. The least depths on the shallowest bars are of consequence. Presently, the minimum depth in the approach channel to Haldia is 5.0 Mtrs. below chart datum at Jellingham and that in the approach channel to Kolkata is 3.3 Mtrs. at Maragoalia. However, the

ships permissible drafts depend on the summation of the minimum depth as above and the rise of tide.

(b) Increase in the navigable depths in the approach channels to Kolkata and Haldia has been the perpetual endeavour through all possible means such as dredging, river training re-alignment of navigable channel and basin. River Regulatory Measures undertaken by Kolkata Port recently include action in all three dimensions of capital dredging, river training measures and re-alignment of existing channels.

(c) Government has approved the proposal of Kolkata Port for execution of River Regulatory Measures for improvement of draft in Hooghly Estuary at an estimated cost of Rs. 350.84 crores. The project is expected to be completed by May, 2003. An increment of Navigable depth by 1.0 mtr. is expected on completion of the project. The targeted navigable depth is 9.5 mtrs. The details of the project includes :

(i)	Capital Dredging over Jiggerkhali Flat including construction of Dyke	Rs. 263.83 crores
(ii)	Trimming of the western face of Nayachara Island	Rs. 26.53 crores
(iii)	Construction of a guidewall at the southern end of nayachara Island	Rs. 41.10 crores
(iv)	Bank Protection Work between Sondia Column and the river Haldi	Rs. 16.64 crores
(v)	Instrumentation and Monitoring studies	Rs. 2.74 crores.

Development of Brahmaputra river for cargo transportation

2232. SHRI INDRAMONI BORA : Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Inland Waterways Authority of India is planning to develop the Brahmaputra river for transportation of cargo to and fro from Assam ;

(b) the fund allocated for de-silting river bed for making it navigation worthy;

(c) the allocation of funds for other infrastructures which will be necessary to attract private investors; and